



**UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE**

**17 December 2018**

**Minute**

- Present:** Peter Mathieson (Convener)  
David Argyle, Leigh Chalmers Eleri Connick, Gavin Douglas, Hugh Edmiston, David Gray, Gary Jebb, Richard Kenway, Gavin McLachlan, Wendy Loretto, Phil McNaull, Theresa Merrick, Dorothy Miell, Andrew Morris, Jane Norman, James Saville, Tracey Slaven, James Smith, Sarah Smith and Moira Whyte.
- In attendance:** Siân Bayne for Item 4, Lee Hamill, Fiona Boyd and Lewis Allan.
- Apologies:** Charlie Jeffery, Chris Cox, Dave Robertson and Jonathan Seckl.

**1 Minute**

**Paper A1**

The Minute of the meeting held on 20 November was approved subject to minor amendments.

On behalf of the University Executive, the Principal thanked Phil McNaull, Director of Finance, for his service to the University and wished him well for his retirement at the close of the calendar year.

**2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log**

**Paper A2**

There were no matters arising and the action log was noted.

**3 Principal's Communications**

**Paper B**

The Principal highlighted items on Brexit and the staff survey to be considered later on the agenda and reported on a capital prioritisation meeting held prior to the University Executive. Colleagues participating in the capital prioritisation discussions were thanked for their contribution to a productive meeting, with details to follow in due course.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**4 Edinburgh Futures Institute: Vision for Teaching**

**Verbal**

Siân Bayne, Assistant Principal Digital Education, provided an overview of emerging plans for course provision within the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI), focusing on eight interdisciplinary 'pathway' MSc degrees to launch in 2021 and 2022. Colleagues were encouraged to consider suitable academic staff for secondments to lead the introduction of the pathway degrees. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Undergraduates should feel involved in the EFI and plans to offer three new interdisciplinary undergraduate degrees within the EFI will assist in enabling this;

- Importance of continuing engagement with public and private sector employers on curriculum design linked to the five TRADE themes (talent, research, adoption, datasets, entrepreneurship) in the City Region Deal's Data-Driven Innovation programme; and,
- The intention that EFI degree programmes should complement existing University programmes, assisted by regular consultation with Heads of School.

## **5 Planning Round Update**

**Verbal, Paper L**

An update on external and internal developments expected to influence the Planning Round was provided, including the Scottish Government's draft 2018-19 budget and future size and shape planning, particularly postgraduate taught provision. It was noted that the flat cash settlement in the Scottish Government draft budget was disappointing but was aligned with the assumptions modelled in the latest iteration of the Ten Year Forecast.

An update on planning for revenue investment for the City Region Deal Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) programme was reviewed. It was noted that the main budget holders have been asked to further develop DDI plans and incorporate these into the rolling three year plans to become 'business as usual' in the medium to long term. There is no 'bid' process or separate investment fund. The resources available to the DDI Board provide for Programme Management Office costs and initial business case development/'stand-up' phase of agreed projects. Such projects must have the agreement of the Head of College.

## **6 Brexit Update**

**Verbal**

An overview of recent Brexit developments and implications for University planning was considered. The undergraduate prospectus for 2020-21 entry will be printed in January 2019 with tuition fee arrangements for European Union students in this cohort awaiting government decision. The University's Business Continuity Manager is developing guidance for Heads of School and professional services colleagues. Potential for disruption of digital supplies as well as physical supplies was raised.

## **7 King's Buildings Shuttle Bus Service**

**Paper B**

An outline of benefits and risks associated with increasing the frequency and capacity of the King's Buildings Shuttle Bus Service was reviewed. Noting that a strategy for student inter-site transport is under development with the assistance of external consultants and is due in March 2019, it was agreed to consider next steps when the strategy is finalised. In the interim, student communications and engagement with the City of Edinburgh Council were considered, with a Principal's student Town Hall meeting at King's Buildings scheduled in February and the Principal to meet with senior City Council officers.

## **8 Plan S**

**Paper C**

The likely impact of a new initiative supported by major UK and European funding bodies to accelerate the transition to full and immediate Open Access for research publications was reviewed. Noting the potential long term benefits, short term costs

and potential unintended consequences were considered. The draft outline consultation and compliance plan was approved as set out in the paper.

**9 Strategic Plan Performance Measurement Framework** **Paper D**

The annual overview of progress using the Strategic Plan 2016 performance measurement framework was presented. It was noted that the measures will be reviewed within the Strategic Plan refresh and minor amendments made to the Court version will be incorporated within the University Executive version.

**10 Staff Survey** **Paper E**

Next steps following the circulation of the Staff Survey results and (to a more limited audience) verbatim comments and the identification of areas of focus by the Senior Leadership Team were reviewed. Heads of School commented on initial School-level discussions, with further work to disaggregate results for academic and professional services staff requested. The importance of improving training and support for managers was highlighted, including training and support in tackling poor performance. The areas of strategic pan-University focus were agreed as set out in the paper, with a more detailed ongoing communications plan to be developed in early 2019.

**11 Finance Director's Report** **Paper F**

The Quarter 1 forecast position and the period 3 (October 2018) management accounts were presented. The importance of seeking efficiencies in the University's cost base and improving forecasting of income generation as the Planning Round progresses were highlighted by the Director of Finance.

**ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

**12 Annual Procurement Report** **Paper G**

The first statutory annual procurement report was approved.

**13 UoE Utilities Supplies Ltd – Revised Governance Arrangements** **Paper H**

Revised governance arrangements for the University of Edinburgh Utilities Supply Company Limited were approved as set out in the paper subject to a minor amendment to remove a reference to a Court member joining the Board.

**14 Disclosure of Intimate Relationships Policy** **Paper I**

An updated version of the Disclosure of Intimate Relationships Policy was noted, with a template for reporting staff-staff relationships in addition to the staff-student template requested.

**15 AI and Data Ethics**

**Paper J**

The establishment of an AI and Data Ethics Advisory Board and supporting structure was approved as set out in the paper.

**16 European Strategic Partnerships Update**

**Paper K**

An update on developing strategic partnerships with a number of European universities was reviewed, with the importance of European partnerships regardless of the UK's departure from the European Union affirmed.

**17 University Executive Communications**

**Verbal**

Communications on the Edinburgh Futures Institute, King's Buildings Shuttle Bus, Staff Survey and the establishment of the AI and Data Ethics Advisory Board were agreed.

**18 Any Other Business**

**Verbal**

There was no other business. The Principal thanked all colleagues and wished them well for the festive season.

**19 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 15 January 2019.